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## Unwriting medieval song

Emma Dillon

Bel m'es quan la fueill'altana

el aut ra[m] branquilla

e.l rossinholet s'afana

desotz la ramilla,

que.l blacx frim e la luguana

del chant que grazilla.

Quecx auzels ques a votz sana

del cantar s'atilla,

es esforsa s'en la rana

lonc la fontainilla,

e.l chavans ab sa chavana,

s'als non pot, grondilla.

I like it when the lofty foliage shoots on the high branch and the little nightingale  
under the bough exerts itself, for in the early dawn the oak copse reechoes with the  
trilling song.

Each bird that has a good, true voice applies itself to singing; the frog beside the little  
spring tries to do so and the owl, with its female mate, if it can do no more, hoots.

Marcabru (c. 1127-1150), Bel m'es quan la fueill' altana (PC 293: 21).<sup>1</sup>

Linguists may rightly tell us of sovereign mysteries of language structure and process;  
but only lift a voice in song, and all humans are struck – enthralled, seduced,  
threatened, made, or unmade – by these powers.

Gary Tomlinson<sup>2</sup>

“Critics say I can’t sing. I croak. Sound like a frog... What have I done to deserve this special attention?” [Bob Dylan] ... Dylan has something better than a “good voice.”

He has a true voice. He has a voice that brings out what truth there is in a song – particularly his own. He wrote those songs, as he’s often said, so that he would have something to sing.<sup>3</sup>

David Remnick

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Medieval Europe holds a special place in the history of song. With the emergence of the troubadours in twelfth-century Occitan, there began a tradition of vernacular song that still resonates today. Yet those early repertoires are permeated with ambiguity and self-consciousness about the very medium of creation and communication: chan. Chan and chantar lie at the heart of vernacular lyric inspiration, as pretext for creative production, as the consequence and prompt of love, and as the invisible agent of communication between the protagonist and dedicatee of a song. What, though, did these categories signify? The objects which were identified, and which self-identified, as song represented a broad, frequently contradictory set of creative scenarios. As the troubadour’s influence took root in other linguistic and geographical contexts, so did the category chan / canso / chanson / cantiga / minnesang become a commonplace. Across traditions, song-makers described verbal creations that were void of a melodic line as chant, while within the textures of notated trouvère songs moments of reported communication were often cast as dit (speech). German repertoires of voiced poetry placed unambiguous priority on song’s expressive function, conjoining the singing act with courtly aspiration in the term minnesang. Later in Italy, Dante, author of one of the first formal histories of song, unfolded his Divina commedia song by song (canto

by canto), but without evidence of a pitched line. Meanwhile, as song took to the page in manuscript anthologies, song's material life, as a thing to be written or notated (notée), added to this already diverse lexicon.

Song's taxonomy is no less contested in the disciplinary venues most frequently charged to make sense of its history – musicology and literary studies. They share a common ground of terminology: song and its associated vocabulary (voice, poetry, music, lyric, to name but a few) are engrained in the scholarly apparatus of each. They also share common objects of study: troubadour song is the originary vernacular repertory for scholars of French literary history as well as musicologists. Yet to be a song student in one or the other setting does not amount to the same thing. The connotations of song are, frequently, startlingly at odds.

My contribution concerns a separation of interests around perhaps the most fundamental and self-evident dimension of the shared object of study: song's status as something to be sung. Musicology's orientation to song has typically identified the category's sonorous implication as the melodic rendering of words. Its specialized analytical apparatus is set up to engage with song as a medium that is geared for performance and crafted of sonic as well as verbal matter – melody, voice, notation. Thus, in his seminal study of medieval song, John Stevens identifies an unambiguous distinction in song between words and music, and states his conviction that 'understanding of medieval song was bound to be based, if it was to be true to the facts, on an understanding of melody.'<sup>4</sup> With a few exceptions, accordingly, songs without extant evidence of melody fall outside the field of musicological inquiry.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the same object of study can be all but muted within the context of literary history, where song may be constituted as a primarily linguistic process – as poetry – and kept at some distance from musical considerations. These distinctly

different orientations to song obtain for the study not just of medieval European repertoires, of course, but also of many other epochs and cultural traditions.

This uneasy historical and disciplinary dissonance of epistemologies is the starting point for my essay. By pursuing song's categories along a double track of historical and historiographical inquiry, my purpose is not to propose a reform or revolution of existing disciplinary approaches, nor is it to posit a new definition of 'song' in the repertoires explored. Rather, it is to invite an expansion of the ways of thinking about song by turning attention to an area of song history that resides at the fault-line of musicology and literary history: song's sound. This fragile currency has usually been circumscribed in musicology as concern with melodic evidence, while in literary studies it often subsumed in abstractions of a given text's 'lyrical' qualities. However, to engage with this most tricky area of song's history seems vital; for it is through its sound that song's deep bonds with the spectrum of human feeling and experience are forged – wherein lies its power to render us 'enthralled, threatened, seduced, made, and unmade.'<sup>6</sup>

The impulse to historicize song's sound, and song's self-conceptualization as a sonorous entity, takes up an invitation issued by a long-standing concern with the oral/aural nature of the medieval vernacular texts. Among the most influential of such approaches is that of Paul Zumthor, who argued strenuously for an attentiveness to the voix or voice of French vernacular texts.<sup>7</sup> Zumthor's voix was, however, primarily shorthand for a highly developed theory of the oral condition of much French medieval poetry, drawing attention to the unwritten texts to which scribes bore witness but whose vocal techniques and timbres their writings rarely recorded. Voice, too, is a category that begs for closer attention, together with the vibrating, incarnate spectrum of its associations.

Such inquiry is greatly assisted by the recent blossoming of interest in historicizing sound more generally, which is in turn part of the ‘sound studies’ movement in the humanities and social sciences.<sup>8</sup> Situating song, as sound practice, within the broader arena of sonic subjects offers new ways to interrogate the standard epistemological regimes and taxonomies through which we deal with it. In a similar vein, the historicizing maneuver is informed by a comparative approach – one which this special issue itself models – in which specific periods within song’s vast tradition may productively converse with each other. Transhistorical, cross-cultural dialogue – among the troubadours, pre-modern Aztec cantares, the corpus of contemporary singer/song-writers, to name but a few – offers another context in which to engage with the heterogeneity of song’s categories, inviting speculation about how to apply labels such as song, singing, poetry, and music at any given moment of song’s history. Finally, acknowledgement that where there is song there is also a tradition of song criticism, one contesting and shaping the terms of song’s engagement with those categories, likewise underpins my approach.<sup>9</sup>

My historical focus here is on the tradition that began with the Occitanian troubadours. Their repertoires have a special claim in musicology and French literary studies alike as the earliest extant examples of a tradition of vernacular song and poetry recorded in writing. They occupy pole position in the respective fields – as the ‘beginning’ or ‘origins’ of European song. It is a tradition with a long reach, a model for numerous other mother-tongue traditions, and one that resonated for song-makers well into the fourteenth century; it interacts, too, with liturgical and Latin song practice, and was embraced as an exemplum in attendant fields of music theory, rhetoric, and what might loosely qualify as early song criticism. There is room here to pursue only one of these threads: my essay thus follows an early line of influence and

transmission from the troubadours into repertories and manuscripts of Northern French song and literary production until around 1230, the period when song first encountered writing. Tracing song at the verge of its encounter with writing (including musical notation) will prove vital, I suggest, for the construction of later regimes that engage with song's sound.

The essay, organized around three scenarios for song, takes its cue from song's deep-rooted reflexive mechanism: there was perhaps no more prized subject in the early vernacular tradition than song itself. In what follows, then, I present three cases of song's self-representation: first, a song about singing; second, the simulation of a song within a song; finally, a song appropriated into the voice of a character from a romance narrative.

#### I A song about singing

Non es meravelha s'eu chan  
melhs de nul autre chantador,  
que plus me tra.l cors vas amor  
e melhs sui faihz a so coman.

Cor e cors e saber e sen                      5  
e fors' e poder i ai mes;  
Si.m tira vas amor lo fres  
que vas outra part no.m aten.

It is no wonder that I sing better than any other singer, for my heart draws me toward love and I am better suited to its command. In it I have placed my heart and body, my knowledge and mind, my force and power. The rein so draws me toward love that I turn my attention nowhere else.

Bernart de Ventadorn, Non es meravelha, I (PC 70: 31, L 1)<sup>10</sup>

My starting point is a canso by one of the great celebrities of troubadour culture:

Bernart de Ventadorn (c.1145-1180). Non es meravelha, among the most frequently copied songs of the tradition, is an ideal exemplum for song's self-thematization.

According to its editors, this is the 'signature song not only for Bernart de Ventadorn but for the courtly lyric'.<sup>11</sup> Its opening stanza offers an elegant demonstration of chan as a topic for song. Bernart-protagonist claims to sing better than anyone else because, he says, his heart is better qualified to obey love's command. Love forms the subject of the ensuing six stanzas, which cover the whole gamut of its experience from joy to loss. The song thus sustains the linkage between the song's subject (love) and its medium of expression (song) set out in that opening couplet. Framing himself as chantador, Bernart emphatically links his authority to the act of singing and performance. A closing tornada confirms the identity of the preceding expression as a song, reconceptualizing the performance as a finished, repeatable entity and dispatching it to his lady as 'lo vers' (a term frequently paired with chan):

A Mo Cortes, lai on ilh es,  
tramet lo vers, e ja no.lh pes  
car n'ai estat tan lonjamen.

To my Cortes, wherever she is, I send the song, and never may it grieve her that I have been away so long.

Non es meravelha is most obviously a song because it identifies itself as such. It is also retroactively identified as a song by scribes and compilers who, many generations later, copied it in manuscript anthologies (chansonnières) dedicated to works like it. In fact around 2500 such songs are extant, forty-five of which are



attributed to Bernart.<sup>12</sup> This one shares with that cohort characteristics of structure, versification, and rhyme that make it formally distinct from other modes of literary production.<sup>13</sup> What, though, of the medium of its transmission in performance? What does this song's opening self-representation signify? Song is cast as an act of the embodied voice of the chantador, but a voice that does what, exactly? When Bernart sings, what sound is he imagined to make? This is arguably the most ambiguous aspect of song's identity, yet the one most often taken for granted. In fact a closer look at how singing features in modern epistemologies of troubadour song reveals curiously little interrogation of the status and sonic implications of the medium chan. Sound is subsumed, rather, in discussions that give greater priority to what is sung, that is, to song's philological aspect, and defined within debates about song's orality, variance, and memory.<sup>14</sup> In other words, the written representation of song has impacted the modern and disciplinary understanding of singing as a medium in itself. Returning to contexts for Bernart's song will illustrate how song's trajectory in writing has contributed to assumptions about what singing is, and, by extension, what constitutes a song.

As is typical for this repertory, there is a considerable gap between the time of the song's creation and its written record: the song is extant in nineteen chansonniers, the earliest dating from circa 1230, and several others dating from the fourteenth century. These versions exhibit a high degree of textual variance, or mouvance.<sup>15</sup> Two versions are radically distinct in that they contain musical notation: a single musical line flows over the written words, marked in square notes on staves to indicate pitch (but not rhythm, as is standard for this repertory; see footnote for a link to manuscript).<sup>16</sup> These notated sources, then, offer a singable melody to correlate with the activity of the chantador. However, not all troubadour songs can claim such

explicit evidence of their chan; only ten percent of the 2500 extant songs survive with melodies, and of the thirty or so song sources just four contain musical notation.<sup>17</sup> The majority of songbooks thus present texts without provision for notation, and some with folios ruled up for music, but with staves left unfilled.

Scholars have interpreted the presence and absence of notated melody in various ways, reflecting long-standing disciplinary assumptions. One argument, common to musicology, is that the absence of notation reflects the largely oral/aural processes of transmission and recreation of song in a culture where musical notation was rare or entirely foreign – although that might not preclude written circulation of the words. Thus the absence of notation does not necessarily imply an absence of melody, since this could be summoned from memory. Conversely, the absence of notation may demonstrate that songs were conceived as a divisible binary; words and melodies, poetry and music: that words could stand without melody yet retain their status as song is a view widely held in literary studies.

These perspectives on the sources have in turn shaped how the two fields of study contrasted here orientate towards song's sonic properties. Within musicology, melody has stimulated an analytical tradition geared to exploration of how music interacts with, enhances, and perhaps even contributes to the semantic meaning of the text.<sup>18</sup> Another theme in music analysis concerns melodic variance: evidence of musical mouvance, it is argued, adds to the picture of how songs were transmitted and transformed in performance, the product of oral processes of creation and recreation.<sup>19</sup>

By contrast, scholars concerned with song's place in a literary canon routinely publish editions without melodies (for example, editions of Bernart's texts, entitled Chansons d'amour or Love Songs), while musical considerations are often absent from literary critique. Writers record varying degrees of discomfort about this

absence. Zumthor argues that the term canso must imply melody, that the lack of notation must be adduced as a loss that leaves the texts incomplete in some basic sense. Thus, he notes, ‘in spite of a widespread but erroneous opinion, it was by its musicality much more than by its themes that troubadour poetry, at the dawn of European civilization, left an indelible mark on our poetic sensibility’.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile, Marisa Galvez, in a fascinating cross-cultural study of medieval songbooks, offers an alternative interpretation: she argues that in song’s written transmission melody is ‘a stratum of meaning comparable to the editorial and visual meanings’, one that may recede as new priorities – to recast song as a poetic corpus – ascend.<sup>21</sup>

Taken together these disciplinary soundings suggest the variety of views about the constituent components and identity of Bernart’s song as sonic event. At the same time, they indicate clear consensus on a basic structural definition of song: that song is constituted of words and music, that these could involve two separate creative processes, that they come together as one in performance, and that they can also ‘divorce’ and exist independently from one another. This distinction is not, of course, unique to studies of medieval song studies: it forms the cornerstone of a modern epistemology of European song history.

It is song’s incarnation in writing, then, that contributes to its classification into discrete categories of words and melody, a reflection of the graphic systems which represent song along parallel but separate tracks – of letters and of staves. However, with a few rare exceptions, no notated sources of vernacular song survive from before the thirteenth century.<sup>22</sup> And as Amelia Van Vleck has established, it is equally likely that text-only sources were similarly belated.<sup>23</sup> For the first hundred years of its history, vernacular song was largely unwritten and invisible; and it remained so for many who encountered song in the era of the chansonnier. That is not

to say that song-makers did not distinguish song as an act of performance from song as an objectified, deliberately manufactured object and as something to be remembered. In the case of Non es meravelha, the song represents itself as an expressive outpouring happening in real time (sung performance); and then, in its tornada, it looks back to describe itself as a complete, repeatable entity, to be dispatched to the lady Cortes.<sup>24</sup> This confirms performance as one iteration of the song, its objectification as another. However, neither representation – sung performance or song object – splits song the way notation does into words and melodies. Considered without the visual regimes that separate sound from word, was song understood as a dual system of verbal and melodic production? Or did other conceptions pertain?

It is possible that chan and chantar embraced a more varied range of meanings than those constructed by the encounter with notation. To explain what is at stake, it will be useful to consider evidence from some very different traditions. There are resonances, for example, with Aztec cantares, another case where song's material encounters effected a radical reconceptualization of their sounding correlate. As Gary Tomlinson argues, certain forms of song's material representation (painted pictographs and glyphs or wood carved instruments) illuminate the 'worldly materiality of ... song'. Meanwhile other encounters with writing, coming in the wake of European contact, were not unlike the troubadourian situation for assigning to song a distinction between poetry and music that may never have been imagined by their creators.<sup>25</sup> Likewise, and in our own time, the friction between performance and medium of transmission is a major theme in studies of technologies of reproduction: as with writing, there are ontological implications that come with sound's transformations in media charged with fidelity to the sounds they transmit.<sup>26</sup> Finally,

we might turn an ear to the history of a living chantador, such as Bob Dylan. Spectrogram analysis recently undertaken by Steven Rings, tracking over forty years of performance, reveals in Dylan's songs a story of timbres charged with extraordinary powers of association and communication, at times surpassing and even erasing melody altogether.<sup>27</sup> I do not suggest that the semantic field of singing in troubadour culture is equivalent to these examples. Rather, they invite curiosity about the unscriptable, untranslatable facets of early medieval singing, which, like the cantares, may be resistant to writing or, as Rings's analysis of Dylan shows, embrace a broader spectrum of vocal parameters.

Given these reflections, what would it mean to un-write song from its written record? One fruitful line of enquiry examines the terms of song's self-representation.<sup>28</sup> In a tradition notorious for its highly systematic and controlled uses of theme and topic, attention to song's vocabularies offers a method of how song was being conceptualized in an era before it was being written down. A brief foray into the lexicon associated with chan and chantar will illustrate this. The term chantar can denote the medium of transmission of song, in contrast to its transmission through parchment. Jaufre Rudel (c. 1130-1148) deploys this distinction in his canso Quan lo rius de la fontana (PC 262: 5): 'Senes breu de pargamina / tramet lo vers, que chantam / en plana lengua romana' ('Without parchment brief I transmit the song in singing plainly and in romance tongue').<sup>29</sup> Jaufre contrasts two possible locations of song – in performance and in -physical matter – in order, as his editors make clear, to privilege performance as the primary mode of transmission.

Jaufre's formulation highlights another common coupling: the opposition between vers (song-object) and chantar (activity/singing). In other cases, vers is opposed to son. For example, the vida of Peire d'Alvernhe (fl. 1150-1180)

characterizes Peire as making the best sounding songs/verses: ‘sons de vers’.<sup>30</sup> Editors often translate son as ‘melody’. But its principal meaning is simply ‘sound’: the raw material out of which melodies might be made. Pax in nomine Domini! (PC 293:35), attributed to Marcabru (c. 1127-1150), repeats this duality, although in a more frequently transmitted version of the song son (sound) is contrasted with motz (words): ‘Pax in nomine Domini!/ Fez Marcabruns los motz e.l.so.’<sup>31</sup> The opposition between motz and son indicates the possibility of a dual activity of word-making and sound-making, where the nature of son remains undefined.

Jaufre brings a cluster of song-related words together in a mini-glossary, at the beginning of Non sap chantar (PC 262: 3):

Non sap chantar qui so non di  
ni vers trobar qui motz no fa,  
ni conois de rima co.s va  
si razo non enten en si.

He does not know how to sing who does not utter sound, nor create a vers who does not make words, nor does he know of rhyme how it goes if he does not understand reason within himself.<sup>32</sup>

The song breaks down song-making into performance, invention of the vers and rhyming. Each of these components implies further distinctions: chantar as a quality of son, vers of motz, and rima of razo. Singing requires sound, just as making a song does words, and as rhyme does reason.

Another line of inquiry connects chantar to the medium of delivery—the voice. Votz appears in a number of contexts conjoined with chan or chantar: singing is an activity of the voice. However, the configuring of votz and chan demonstrates that many inflections and qualities can attach to a singing voice; son is just one

property of chan. It is well known that the best voices belong not to humans, but to birds, particularly nightingales – the frequent source of inspiration for song. According to Elizabeth Eva Leach’s study of birdsong and medieval music theory, the troubadour nightingale is the ultimate symbol of ‘the oral, singing poetic voice’.<sup>33</sup> Bernart de Ventadorn’s Can l’erba fresch’ e.lh folha par (PC 70: 39, L 20), for example, opens with ‘e.l rossinhols autet e clar / leva sa votz e mou so chan’: ‘the nightingale lifts his voice high and clear and sings his song’.<sup>34</sup> Notable here is the fact that the bird’s voice has particular qualities – it sings ‘autet et clar.’ Marcabru makes the same point through playful presentation of vocal hierarchies in Bel m’es quan la fueill’ altana (PC 293: 21).<sup>35</sup> As in so many exordia, the poet is stirred by the sound of nightingale’s song in the woods (‘del chant que grazilla’) and observes that the most truthful voices, ‘votz sana’, best suited to singing, belong to nightingales, although frogs try their best to sing, and owls, if nothing else, hoot: ‘Quecx auzels ques a votz sana / del cantar s’atilla, / et esforsa s’en la rana / lonc la fontainilla, / e.l chavans ab sa chavana, / s’als non pot, grondilla.’

Human voices too exhibit variety. At their worst, they join the abject end of the bestiary spectrum of vocal failures: ‘Qui non sap esser chantaire, briare’ (‘He who does not know how to sing, brays’), according to a canso attributed to Jaufre, –an evident play on his Non sap chanter. A more detailed formulation of the qualities of votz comes in Peire d’Alvehne’s sirventes Chantarai d’aquestz trobadors (PC 323: 11).<sup>36</sup> Described by Aniello Fratta as a ‘group photo’,<sup>37</sup> the song portrays twelve troubadours, Peire’s contemporaries, with varying degrees of admiration and denigration. A central criterion is each one’s competence as a singer. The opening thus announces Peire’s intention to sing a song about a whole spectrum of troubadours (‘Chantarai d’aquestz trobadors / que chantan de manhtas colors,’ ‘I’ll

sing of those many troubadours who sing in many styles'). 'Color' here evokes a topic of rhetoric, but is extended to apply to performance. Thus a number of stanzas take potshots at how a given troubadour's song sounds: '... Guirautz de Bornelh, que sembla oire sec al solelh / ab son chantar magre dolen, / qu'es chans de vielha portaselh ...' ('Giraut de Bornelh, who resembles a goatskin dried in the sun with his weak and pitiful singing, like the song of an old woman water-carrier'). Peire naturally reserves the highest praise for his own color, in the fourteenth stanza:

Peire d'Alvernhe a tal votz  
 que non canta sus ni desotz,  
 e lauza.s mout a tota gen;  
 pero maiestres es de totz,  
 ab q'un pauc esclarzis sos motz,  
 qu'a penas nulhs hom los enten.

Peire d'Alvernhe has such a voice that he sings low or high, and praises himself to everyone; however, he is the master of all, if only he would make his words a bit clearer, because hardly anyone understands them.<sup>38</sup>

The interlinking of motz, votz, son, chantar within the lexicon of performance echoes a much older conception of voice, one derived from the traditions of Latin grammar, rhetoric, and music theory. In the most basic accounts of the units of languages, vox and verbum are intricately connected: there is no verbum that does not have a vox. In turn, there is no vox without sonus, of which cantus is just one category. The extent to which these traditions were familiar to the troubadours solicits further investigation. But these perspectives reiterate a prevailing conception of words in the Middle Ages: words are sounds uttered by the voice.<sup>39</sup>

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This brief foray into the vernacular song lexicon points to some familiar – and less familiar – connotations of song at the early frontier of the tradition. A few features are worth reiterating. First, that song characterizes itself as a performance (heard, sung), and as a ‘thing’ (a repeatable, dispatchable entity), not necessarily written. Second, that the modern distinction between words and music does not correlate with more varied oppositions set up in the songs: vers/chan; chan/son; motz/son. Third, that when song is written down, it records melodic pitch as the primary record of song’s sound, whereas the lexicon points to that more expansive range of sound qualities which is indicated by the son of words. Fourth, that certain values we might primarily associate with semantics are attached to the sound of a song – the son of words at times aspires to be sana or true, clar or comprehensible. Finally, that there are no words which do not have voices – although there are some voices, like the nightingale’s, which do not have words – and, thus, that the configuration of words with sound is subject to the qualities of a particular votz.

## II Simulated songs

Bele Yolanz en ses chambres seoit;  
d’un boen samiz une robe cosoit;  
a son ami trametre la voloit.

En sospirant cest chançon chantoit:  
Deus, tant est douz li nons d’amors,  
ja n’en cuidai sentir dolors.

Lovely Yolande was sitting in her chamber; she was sewing a robe of fine samite; she wanted to send it to her lover. Sighing, she sang this song: ‘God, how sweet is the name of love! I never thought it would make me feel such sorrow’.

Anon, Bele Yolanz en ses chambres, I (RS 1847; T 1059)<sup>40</sup>

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A lady sewing in her chamber, longing for her heart's desire; a shepherdess roaming the woods in search of her shepherd, pursued by a curious chevalier. These are among the situations of song we explore next. Song is not only its own premise and topic; it also finds its way into songs inserted into the voices of protagonists. Sometimes the effect is intensified by the use of quotation from a pre-existing song, while in other cases song events are newly invented – simulations of song. In either situation, these moments of mise en abyme are sites of heightened awareness of the medium itself: places where song talks back to itself, about itself.

The anguish of the beautiful Yolanz (cited above) resonated in a song dating from several decades after Bernart and his cohort set the tone for love. It comes from the repertory of the French *trouvères*, active from the 1170s, and earliest emulators of the troubadours. While there are some equivalent scenarios, few songs within songs in the troubadour corpus quote pre-existent songs; it is in the later French tradition that quoting and simulating song take root.<sup>41</sup> In fact, song's self-representation should be understood as part of a wider practice, as an early form of song criticism which in various forms date from the turn of the thirteenth century. For example, circa 1200 the first vernacular grammars and poetry treatises began to appear, quoting and referencing troubadour songs; at the same time the biographical vidas and razos to accompany songs were created.<sup>42</sup> Two or three decades later, song took a material turn in the chansonniers. As respondents to their song culture, the examples this section considers were not only contributors to a living practice, but also participants in curation and codification of a tradition, one that could be quoted, simulated, parodied, or stereotyped. We might ask, therefore: What was needed for a song to sound and behave convincingly as a song?

The example quoted above is the opening stanza of a chanson originating in the early years of the thirteenth century. It survives in only one place, chansonnier U, the earliest extant notated source of French song, compiled circa 1231 (see footnote for a link to the manuscript).<sup>43</sup> Encyclopedic in scope, U is also genealogical in intent; and as well as codifying songs from the origins of the French tradition, it includes notated examples of troubadour canso (Bernart's included). Written well before the main wave of chansonnier production, the book offers a snapshot of vernacular song culture at a time when song was still predominantly reliant on ear and memory rather than ink and parchment for its preservation. This transitional document discloses areas of resistance to fixity; indications of variable – unfixable – aspects of performance practice; above all, testimony to performative qualities of the song that lie outside a regime of voice as pitched melody. What follows, then, is a brief experiment in unwriting song.

Bele Yolanz is a chanson de toile, also referred to as chanson d'histoire: a narrative genre concerning the love life of a young noblewoman who spins or weaves, and who often sings to herself as she does so.<sup>44</sup> In this instance the lady's interpolated song expresses anguished longing for her lover so heartfelt that it seems to summon him miraculously to her. Over the course of the histoire, her song returns at the end of each narrative stanza, but its meaning adjusts to transform anguish to delight and incredulity that love should ever be doubted. The song concludes as the lovers retire to the lady's bed.

Yolanz's simulated song, 'Deus, tant est douce,' is instantly discernible as an intrusion into the main chanson since it interrupts the form of the song. Lines 1-4 are ten syllables long and organized around the repeating rhyme '-oit'. In contrast Yolanz's lines occupy eight syllables, organized around the rhyme '-ors'. This form

repeats across five further stanzas, each one initiating a new rhyme for the first four lines, followed by repetition of Yolanz's two-line couplet.

Song scenarios such as Yolanz's have long been a source of fascination for literary and musicological studies. However, until recently interest has primarily revolved around origins for the songs quoted, rather than the sonic implications of song's encounter with song. Yolanz's song is classified as a refrain in contemporary scholarship because of its placement – as a reported song act – and its repetitive structural function. 'Refrain' is in fact a hybrid category: applied in medieval song taxonomy to a small unit of repeating song, it has been significantly expanded in modern appropriations, notably by Nico van den Boogaard, to include reported speech/song acts. The reason for this classification is the supposition that what is cued as reported song must also be a repetition of a song that comes from elsewhere.<sup>45</sup> Thus, even though a reported song or speech act may have other sources, it is classified as a refrain on the assumption that it must be a quotation whose source is lost. In a major new study of refrain, Jennifer Saltzstein traces the historiographical trajectory that led to such classifications. She highlights how interest in refrains exemplifies a fruitful modern preoccupation with practices of quotation, intertextuality, and authority-building in the vernacular song and literary repertoires.<sup>46</sup> Particularly pertinent among such work is the analysis of refrain citation and song simulation in a thirteenth-century polytextual motet undertaken by Suzannah Clark, who shows how the motet fashions certain of its song simulations in the style of the monophonic song tradition I explore here. While likewise interested in issues of intertextuality and authority, Clark also points to ways in which the motet is concerned to stage its interruptive voices as audibly distinct.<sup>47</sup>

Clark's model will support further attention to the aural effects of the mise-en-abyme in Yolanz's song. Because the refrain 'Deus, tant est douce' has no other extant sources, we cannot know if the experience of Yolanz's song summoned knowledge of use in other contexts. Within the specific operations of the song, nevertheless, features of rhyme, form, and cuing mark Yolanz's emotional outburst as a distinctive unit within the whole. Yolanz's song within song makes a fascinating case study, precisely because it tests or exaggerates the parameters of the medium by virtue of its self-consciousness qua song. Let me point to one example of the song-like in Yolanz's song.

Voices, as we learned from the troubadours, can have many varied qualities. Bele Yolanz is made for a single performer but carries within it a small chorus of voices: the narrator, Yolanz talking/singing to herself, the lover who eventually arrives, and the two in dialogue. The melody in U, written out just once, seems implacably noncommittal about these comings and goings--with the exception, that is, of the refrain's introduction in stanza one, where it takes a sound shape distinctly different from that of its host. A notable if clichéd cue attends Yolanz's first launch into song: 'souspirant' ('sighing'), she sings. This vocal indication is not merely decorative, but characterizes the sound-effect of the refrain that follows. Yolanz's short song is built around the rhyme sound '-ors', deriving from, and conjoining, 'amors' and 'dolors' (an echo of an older troubadourian sentiment). The melodic version in U changes the pace of verbal projection, moving from largely syllabic projection of words, to prolongation of the rhyme words of Yolanz's song – visible of a clustering of notes at this point in the manuscript. Spinning out song's line endings is common in U and other chansonnières, and these are frequently the most unstable areas of song's written transmission, seeming to denote a spot open to adaptation or

variance in performance. While it is impossible to reconstruct such sound, the scenario here signals some kind of sighing hiatus in the vocal flow of words. In Bele Yolan this is, I suggest, inextricably linked to the expressivity of non-linguistic utterance. Yolan's 'song' here shape the mouth to the contour of rhyme sound '-ors': echoing through the song, then, is an effect equating to an outward breath, a voice 'souspirant' – 'ors...ors'.

Evidence that non-semantic verbal effects form part of song's taxonomy is witnessed in instances of another genre recorded in U. These cases are even more explicit, often satirically so, in simulating song as a kind of extreme use of linguistic sound effects, heightened through vocal delivery. Chevauchois lez un bruel (RS 994, T 58), also transmitted in U (see footnote for a link to the manuscript),<sup>48</sup> exemplifies a genre well-known for its reported speech and singing acts. The pastourelle is a multi-character narrative, and recounts various permutations of a love-triangle of shepherd, shepherdess, and chevalier. Highly conventionalized, and often comedic in nature, it offers further illustrations of song simulation. In this case, the interpolated simulations, which occur at parallel points in each of the three stanzas, are essentially unscriptable. First the narrator reports coming upon a shepherdess in a wood who sings to herself: 'trovai pastore que vuel, / tote soule, senz orguel / en destor / He, o dorelo, dorelo / dorelo, do!...'. In the next stanza he quotes her: 'El regarda vers moi, / si parla: / He a, ciquedondi, quedondi, / quedondi, da!' (She looked at me and said "He a, ciquedondi, quedondi, quedondi, da!") And in the final stanza he quotes her song back to her, in a plea for her love: 'Pastourelle, je vos pri, / de moi faciez vostre ami! ... o, en dorenlo, dorenlo / dorenlo, dé!' (Shepherdess, I beg you, make me your lover, "o, en dorenlo, dorenlo, dorenlo dé!")

A measure of these songs' resistance to written representation is their resistance to modern categories of song. While cataloguing them as refrains, on the grounds that they function as song/speech acts, Boogaard contained them in a separate appendix among a category of 'refrains onomatopéiques'.<sup>49</sup> This appendix lists 27 cases, ranging from the single word 'dorenlot' (R 1882) to longer rhymes, mixing meaningful words or phrases with nonsense syllables, such as 'Va t'en do, revien do, si me di, atan do, qu'il me chant de do, do, dodele' (R1901). Reasons for Boogaard's ambivalence are not hard to detect. Textually, the clatter of consonants, repetition of vowels, and rhythm of repeating patterns explore words for their sound rather than their sense. Musically, too, they test the limits of category, which emerges in this manuscript as a resistance to inscription itself. As with previous examples, the song is notated just once and the same melody is repeated for ensuing stanzas. Because the nonsense refrains occur at the same points in each stanza, all are sung to the same melody. The line notated here, however, is barely melody at all: the notation marks simply an intonation on a single note (visible at the beginning of the third line of music). Unlike the remainder of the song, where the melody is mobile and wide-ranging, the line stands out starkly. The short jumbled utterances thus seem to emanate from a zone in the song spectrum resistant to the binary of words and music. In this case, stereotyping song reveals the limitations of the word-melody/poetry-music categories, and the limits, too, of music writing. What arises from these examples is instead a kind of song wrought as a sound effect brought out by, but not applied to, the words – words that are innately sonorous objects, sounding events in which the patterns of vowels, rhymes, and consonants take over both from meaning and from notatable melody.

### III Songs in stories

Il monte, et chevaliers bien cent  
por s'onor sor les biaux destriers,  
qui vont devant lui et detriers.  
N'orent pas chevaichié grant piece  
quant uns niés l'envesque dou Liege  
qui mout se set biau deporter,  
conmença cesti a chanter:

Or viennent Pasques les beles en avril...

Ceste n'est pas tote chantee,  
uns chevaliers de la contree  
dou parage de Danmartin  
conmença cest son potevin:

Quant voi l'aloete moder...<sup>50</sup>

In he rode, and some hundred fine mounted knights came ahead and around him, to do him honour. They had not gone far when the nephew of the Bishop of Liège, who comported himself well, began to sing this: Or viennent Pasques les beles en avril ('When Easter comes')... This song had not been sung far when knight from Danmart began to this Poitevin song: Quant voi l'aloete moder ('When I see the lark')...

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Around the time of U's compilation, certain of its songs were finding homes elsewhere. They were interpolated into the voices of lovelorn nobles and their jongleurs and summoned as the soundtrack of courtly festivities (like the one narrated in the example above). The convention of inserting songs into French romances – romans à chansons<sup>51</sup> – dates from the 1220s and persists well into the fourteenth



century. At first sight these songs are defined by exuberant performativity – one recent account describes characters in Jean Renart’s Guillaume de Dole (my focus here) as ‘behav[ing] as if they were in a karaoke bar’.<sup>52</sup> It is from this tradition that I draw my final exemplum of turn-of-the-century perspectives on song’s identity.<sup>53</sup>

Guillaume de Dole (dated 1220), the earliest example of a roman à chansons, is an especially inviting test case. While its author claims that the move to insert songs is ‘une nouvele chose’ (‘a new thing’), many of the forty-eight interpolations of song draw inspiration from the Occitan and French traditions. Where songs are inserted into the voice of a character (as in the festal scene above), they follow patterns of cuing and description similar to those we saw in Bele Yolanz. This congruence speaks of a literary practice deeply immersed in song tradition, one whose novel act of built-in codification contributed to the founding discourses of song criticism itself.

Yet for all their promise as witness to song’s performativity, the sonic implications of Guillaume de Dole are unclear. As with the majority of romans à chansons there is no melodic notation in the single manuscript version of Guillaume de Dole.<sup>54</sup> While, as we have seen, the transmission of songs without melodies is common,<sup>55</sup> the absence of musical notation in the romans à chansons has had a profound impact on their interpretation. Scholars have accounted for the absence of melodic information in a variety of ways. One possibility is that the song reference, usually just the opening line or stanza, functions as a place-holder, an intertextual reference that summons a narrative correspondence between the fuller text of the song and its new narrative setting. Again, it may be understood as a prompt to supply what is missing from the store of memory or, later, from notated chansonnières.<sup>56</sup> Others have argued that these were not texts inviting performance or demanding connection

with a specific melody, but rather were literary representations that transferred the medium of performance into the medium of writing, where sonic associations fade.<sup>57</sup>

Song's ambiguous status in these texts has also determined their place both in musicology and in literary studies. In the history of literature, the romans à chansons are usually categorised apart from the 'main' romance tradition. As Maureen Boulton argues, 'a narrative in which lyric poems or songs are inserted is essentially a hybrid creation, combining two disparate forms'.<sup>58</sup> Meanwhile, within musicology their lack of notation has excluded the romans à chansons almost entirely from the standard historical canon.<sup>59</sup>

Returning to consider how song sits in its new context within Guillaume de Dole, let us focus on the second of the interpolations quoted above: Quant voi l'aloete moder, sung by a young man at the festivities of an Emperor's wedding to a beautiful woman, Lienor. The two stanzas quoted bring us full circle, for they come from the opening of a canso by Bernart de Ventadorn, Can vei la lauzeta mover (PC 70: 43; L 31) – arguably the most famous song in the troubadour canon. Notwithstanding the absence of notation, it is possible that Jean Renart knew a performed version of the song; Bernart's songs are found in chansonniers which began to appear shortly after the time that Renart was composing his text, including the two notated French chansonniers M and U. The former includes Can vei, which also appears (without notation) in Gerbert de Montreuil's roman à chanson, Le roman de la violette; possibly other notated sources for Guillaume de Dole existed and the sole extant source reflects something lost in transmission. But these hypothetical scenarios for restoration of melody to Bernart's song in Guillaume de Dole miss the point; for the written version of Can vei in the sole surviving source itself testifies to other sonic

possibilities quite independent from melody. While it lacks notation, it does not lack signs of sound.

Scholars of the transmission of Occitan poetry into France have noted the tendency for scribes to ‘translate’ or Gallicize Occitan song texts.<sup>60</sup> At times, their efforts to maintain the basic features of the original poetry (rhyme, syllable count) seem to have overridden the need for verbal equivalence, and indeed, they encountered elements of the Occitan that defied rendering. In semantic terms the results were sometimes incomprehensible. In a recent exploration of troubadour quotation in Guillaume de Dole, Sarah Kay offers a fascinating critique of Bernart’s song, and particularly the strange effects of the ‘translation’ process.<sup>61</sup> Before going further, I present Lazar’s edition of the Occitan version of Can vei, with translation from STT, followed by Regina Psaki’s transcription of the two stanzas as they appear in Guillaume de Dole, reproduced by Kay, along with Kay’s query-peppered translation:

Can vei la lauzeta mover  
de joi sas alas contral rai,  
que s’oblid’ e.s laissa chazer  
per la doussor c’al cor li vai,  
ai! tan grans enveya m.en ve  
de cui qu.eu veyà jauzion,  
meravilhas ai, car desse  
lo cor de dezirer no.m fon.

Ai, las! tan cuidava saber  
d’amor, e tan petit en sai,

car eu d'amar no.m posc tener  
celeis don ja pro non aurai.  
Tout m'a mo cor, e tout m'a me,  
e se mezeis e tot lo mon;  
e can se.m tolc no.m laisset re  
mas dezirer e cor volon.

When I see the lark beat his wings for joy against the sun's ray, until, for the sheer  
delight which goes to his heart, he forgets to fly and plummets down, then great envy  
of those whom I see filled with happiness comes to me. I marvel that my heart does  
not melt at once from desire.

Alas! I thought I knew so much about love, but really, I know so little. For I cannot  
keep myself from loving her from whom I shall have no favour. She has stolen from  
me my heart, myself, herself and all the world. When she took herself from me, she  
left me noting but desire and a longing heart.

Quant voi laloete moder de goi.ses ales  
contre el rai.que sobete lesse cader par  
la doucor q'el cor li vai.ensi grant en  
vie mest pris de ce que voi.a ma grant  
miravile est que vis del sens ne coir do[n]t  
desier non fou. ha las tant cuidoie savoir  
donor et point n'en sai.pas on damar  
non pou tenir celi dont ja prou ne nau[ra]i

tol mei lor cor et tol meismes.et soi mees

me et tol le mon.et por tant el ne moste

rent fors desier et cor volon. – oooo –

When I see the lark move with joy its wings in the sunbeam, which (?) itself, lets itself fall, because of the sweetness that penetrates its heart, just such envy has seized me for that which I see. It is a marvel that completely out of my mind (I do not burn? Do not run?) from which desire (was not? Does not melt?). Alas I imagined I knew so much about honour and I know nothing. I cannot keep (?) from loving her from whom I will never have any benefit. She takes away my heart and takes herself and myself and she takes the world then she (?) gives but desire and a longing heart.

As Kay's interpolation shows, at times the Gallicized text is nonsensical. For example, the Occitan dessen has no French equivalent, and is rendered by 'an approximate homonym in the langue d'oïl, del sen.' While the line makes sense on its own, and is indeed emotionally intensified by the adjustment, it is a kind of sense that strains intelligibility for the sake of something no less important, and perhaps more so. Kay argues that the alterations and search for equivalents intensify the emotion: 'overall, what remains of Bernart's text is a series of expressions of intense feeling that are incoherently strung together.' She goes further, to suggest a connection to the birdsong evoked in Bernart's opening line (the lark), which echoes birds heard in two other Gallicized troubadour songs in the roman (birdsong in Jaufre Rudel; a nightingale in Daude de Pradas); and in the French chanson by Gautier de Soignies that follows Bernart's song. The translation risks semantic confusion in order to align itself sonically to the wordless songs of birds (the greatest songsters of all) and, according to Kay, to make 'the meaning of Bernart's text evaporate into pure song'.<sup>62</sup>

What, though, is the sonic status of ‘song’ in Kay’s formulation of ‘pure song’? The version quoted here seems to invite – if not require – sounding out. The translational glitches, such as the example of dessen as del sen, are premised on finding words that sound equivalent. Another source for Bernart’s canso in France, the notated source M, contains a similarly mangled text.<sup>63</sup> The singable notation in this case suggests that the presence of verbal nonsense need not diminish the potential for meaningful vocalization of the song. Renart’s text as a whole records a language that moves in and out of meaning, and in and out of linguistic sounds that sound familiar, in places where they make no sense – either by virtue of maintaining the original language, or by replacing it with homonyms. There is a craft to the non-semantic aspects of the rendering, a craft directed to the ear and voice. The context elsewhere in Guillaume de Dole of examples such as the chanson de toile or pastourelle, or indeed the vocabularies of voice, sound and song in the original Occitan, encourage a complex, diverse, inclusive sense of the varieties of inflection that voices make with words. In fact, read against these other examples, and with sensitivity to the limits of our particular scholarly taxonomies – for song, melody, words, music, lyric (the list could go on) – the possibility of Renart’s or a scribe’s or a performer’s version of Bernart as a sounding performance is not just possible, but perhaps even essential.

What is at stake in this example, as others examined in this essay, is a facet of song history so fragile as to be barely discernible, and certainly not reconstructible. In the era before sound recording, the contingencies of human voice and performance rely on the written record to bear witness to them but, as I have suggested, frequently elude capture. Yet acknowledgement of song’s sounding life as unscripted by written representation is worth pursuing. It is song’s sound which across history has

consistently been assigned special significance and value, which commentators from Augustine to Rousseau to Derrida appropriate within varied systems of critique as the location of sublime, supernatural powers and emergent human consciousness and language. The place of voice's intersection with words is constantly contested, reconfigured, sought out, and ultimately cherished, precisely because it is so valued as an environment of human expression and sensation.

I have attempted to show here that historicization of song's sounding past benefits from dialogue between musicology and literary studies. Such dialogue is likely to entail querying the history and historiography of the terms and vocabularies through which each field engages with song to break new ground. It may also require the compilation of evidence more usually studied in separate spheres: for example, this essay brings together evidence, drawn from my own primary orientation in musicology, that may be new to literary scholars, but it equally attempts to introduce scholarship and repertory unfamiliar in musicology's canon. The current scholarly climate seems uniquely hospitable to such an interdisciplinary exercise. The context of sound studies provides not just a broader spectrum of approaches to sound, but also a new meeting ground for the disciplines and a model for the interactions needed to expand song's horizon.

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<sup>1</sup> Marcabru: A Critical Edition ed. Simon Gaunt, Ruth Harvey and Linda Paterson (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 2000), no. XXI, 296-307. Troubadour songs are

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referenced here and throughout according to Alfred Pillet and Henry Carstens,

Bibliographie der Troubadours (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1933) [PC].

<sup>2</sup> Gary Tomlinson, A Million Years of Music: The Emergence of Human Modernity (New York: Zone Books, 2015), 288.

<sup>3</sup> David Remnick, 'Bob Dylan, Extending the Line,' The New Yorker, February 9, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> John Stevens, Words and Music in the Middle Ages: Song, Narrative, Dance and Drama, 1050-1350 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 6.

<sup>5</sup> See especially Lauren McGuire Jennings's work on Italian song traditions: Senza Vestimenta: The Literary Tradition of Trecento Song (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

<sup>6</sup> Tomlinson, Million Years of Music, 288.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Zumthor, *La poésie et la voix dans la civilisation médiévale* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1984) which builds on his *Essai de poétique médiévale* (Paris: Seuil, 1972)

<sup>8</sup> For example Mark Smith ed., Hearing History: A Reader (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004), Richard Rath, How Early America Sounded (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), and my Sense of Sound: Musical Meaning in France, 1260-1330 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). The terms and scope of sound studies are set out in Trevor Pinch and Karin Bijsterveld eds., The Oxford Handbook of Sound Studies (New York ; Oxford University Press, 2012) and Jonathan Sterne ed., The Sound Studies Reader (New York: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> The exemplary model for this dual approach to song, and one informing my contribution here, is Gary Tomlinson, The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voice in the Era of European Contact (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).



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<sup>10</sup> There are numerous editions of this song. In the following discussion, I draw on: Bernart de Ventadorn, Bernart de Ventadorn, troubadour du XIIe siècle: chansons d'amour, ed. Moshé Lazar (Paris: Klincksieck, 1966), The Songs of Bernart de Ventadorn, ed. Stephen Nichols and John Galm (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1962); musical editions of some of Bernart's songs are included in Songs of the Troubadours and Trouvères: An Anthology of Poems and Melodies, ed. and transl. Samuel Rosenberg, Margaret Switten and Gérard Le Vot (New York: Garland, 1998), hereafter STT. Lazar includes extensive information about the editorial history of the song and others attributed to Bernart prior to his own: see 237 for a complete summary. In addition to the PC numbering, for Bernart's songs I also provide Lazar's ordering [L].

<sup>11</sup> STT, 60.

<sup>12</sup> For a list of sources, see Chansons d'amour, ed. Lazar, 237.

<sup>13</sup> Details of the song's structure, versification and rhymes are given in commentaries to several of the editions, as is typical for presentation of songs in this tradition. See for example Chansons d'amour, ed. Lazar, 237, and STT, 60.

<sup>14</sup> The foundational work on the oral condition of early song is that of Leo Treitler. See for example With Voice and Pen: Coming to Know Medieval Song and How it was Made (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2007).

<sup>15</sup> The term 'mouvance' derives from Zumthor's Essai. The standard authority on variance and memory in troubadour song is Amelia Van Vleck, Memory and Re-Creation in Troubadour Lyric (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

<sup>16</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fr. 844 (Chansonnier du Roi), folio 191r. This is designated M in the standard sigla of trouvère manuscripts, and W in the sigla

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of troubadour manuscripts. Online at

<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84192440/f397.image>.

<sup>17</sup> Samuel Rosenberg, 'Introduction,' in STT, 4, and William Paden, 'Manuscripts,' in Akehurst and Davis, Handbook, 307-33. See Hendrik van der Werf, 'Melodies,' in Akehurst and Davis, Handbook, 121-64, esp. 123-27, on melodic transmission.

<sup>18</sup> See for example Margaret Switten's analysis of Non es meravehla, which argues that 'the melody captures the bittersweet contrasts of the poetic text'; STT, 60. The following sample represents the standard among melodic analysis of troubadour song: Stevens, Words and Music, 25-36; Margaret Switten, 'Music and Versification: Fetz Marcabrus los motz e.l so,' in Gaunt and Kay, Introduction, 141-63 and 'Music and Words: Methodologies and Sample Analyses,' in STT, 14-28; Hendrik van der Werf, The Chansons of the Troubadours and Trouvères; A Study of the Melodies and their Relation to the Poems (Utrecht: A. Oosthoek, 1972); Elizabeth Aubrey, Poets and Singers: On Latin and Vernacular Monophonic Song (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009); Judith Peraino, Giving Voice to Love: Song and Self-Expression from the Troubadours to Guillaume de Machaut (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 33-67.

<sup>19</sup> See Hendrik van der Werf and Gerald Bond, The Extant Troubadour Melodies: Transcriptions and Essays for Performers and Scholars (Rochester: The Author, 1984).

<sup>20</sup> Paul Zumthor, 'An Overview: Why the Troubadours?,' in Akehurst and Davis, Handbook, 13.

<sup>21</sup> Marisa Galvez, Songbook: How Lyrics Became Poetry in Medieval Europe (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2012), 4.

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<sup>22</sup> John Haines, Medieval Song in Romance Languages (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) and Maria Careri, Livres et écritures en français et en occitan au XIIe siècle: catalogue illustré (Roma: Viella, 2011).

<sup>23</sup> Van Vleck, Memory, 56-68, an important corrective to the older view of Gustav Gröber's hypothesis that in the twelfth century songs circulated as parchment leaves, or *Liederblätter*.

<sup>24</sup> On object metaphors for song, see Van Vleck, Memory, 40-48.

<sup>25</sup> Tomlinson, Singing of the New World, 28-49, quoting from 35.

<sup>26</sup> Jonathan Sterne, MP3: The Meaning of a Format. Sign, Storage, Transmission (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012) and The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

<sup>27</sup> Steven Rings, 'A Foreign Sound to your Ears: Bob Dylan Performs "It's Alright, Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)," 1964-2009,' Music Theory Online, 19 (2013).

<sup>28</sup> I here follow the model of Amelia Van Vleck, Memory, 26-55, where she explores song transmission through analysis of vocabularies pertaining to writing and memory.

<sup>29</sup> Jaufrè Rudel, Il Canzoniere di Jufre Rudel: edizione critica, con introduzione, note e glossario, ed. Giorgio Chiarini (L'Aquila: Japadre, 1985), no. III, 73-84, quoting from stanza 5, 1-3. The song is edited with music in STT, 57-58, and I quote this translation.

<sup>30</sup> 'E trobet ben e canet ben, e fo lo premiers bons trobaire que fon outra mon et aquel que fez los meillors sons de vers que anc fosson faichs', quoting from Peire d'Alvernhe, Peire d'Alvernhe: Poesie, ed. Aniello Fratta (Rome: Vecchiarelli, 1996), 3.

<sup>31</sup> The other reads 'Fetz Marcabru lo vers e.l.so.' See Marcabru, ed. Gaunt, Harvey and Paterson, no. XXXV, 434-53.

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<sup>32</sup> Canzoniere, ed. Chiarini, no I, 55-63.

<sup>33</sup> Elizabeth Eva Leach, Sung Birds: Music, Nature, and Poetry in the Later Middle Ages (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 95, and 90-95 on the nightingale in troubadour song.

<sup>34</sup> Chansons d'amours, ed. Lazar, 20; following the translation Songs, ed. Nichols and Galm, 154.

<sup>35</sup> Marcabru, ed. Gaunt, Harvey and Paterson, no. XXI, 296-307.

<sup>36</sup> Poesie, ed. Fratta, no. 8, 47-59; translation from STT, 77.

<sup>37</sup> Poesie, ed. Fratta, 47.

<sup>38</sup> Stanza 14; translation from STT, 77.

<sup>39</sup> See Leach, Sung Birds, 24-40 and my Sense of Sound, 36-43.

<sup>40</sup> Numbering of trouvère songs follows Hans Spanke, G. Raynauds Bibliographie des altfranzösischen Liedes (Leyden: Brill, 1955, repr. 1980) [RS], and Hans Tischler's edition Trouvère Lyrics with Melodies: Complete Comparative Edition: Opera Omnia, ed. Hans Tischler, Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae, 107, 15 vols. (Neuhausen: American Institute of Musicology, Hänssler-Verlag, 1997) [T]. Bele Yolanz also appears in STT, 188-89. Here I follow Tischler's edition; the translation is my own.

<sup>41</sup> The quotation of troubadour song is the subject of Sarah Kay, Parrots and Nightingales: Troubadour Quotations and the Development of European Poetry (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), especially 123-35.

<sup>42</sup> For complete lists of quotation of troubadour songs see the appendices to Kay, Parrots and Nightingales.

<sup>43</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fr. 20050 (Chansonier Saint-Germain-des-Prés), folios 64v-65r. This is designated U in standard sigla of trouvère manuscripts, and X in the sigla of troubadour manuscripts. Online at

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<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b60009580/f136.image.r=francais%2020050.lang>  
EN.

<sup>44</sup> See Belle: essai sur les *chansons de toile*, suivi d'une édition et d'une traduction, ed. Michel Zink with musical transcriptions by Gérard Le Vot (Paris: Champion, 1978).

<sup>45</sup> Nico van den Boogaard, Rondeaux et refrains du XIIe siècle au début du XIVe (Paris: Klincksieck, 1969) remains the standard catalogue of refrains in the French tradition. See also Eglal Doss-Quinby, Les refrains chez les trouvères du XIIe siècle au début du XIVe (New York: Peter Lang, 1984).

<sup>46</sup> Jennifer Saltzstein, The Refrain and the Rise of the Vernacular in Medieval French Music and Poetry (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2013), esp. 3, and 8-34. For further on quotation and citation see especially Adrian Armstrong, The Virtuoso Circle: Competition, Collaboration, and Complexity in Late Medieval French Poetry (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2012); Adrian Armstrong, Sarah Kay, and Rebecca Dixon (eds.), Knowing Poetry: Verse in Medieval France from the Rose to the Rhétoriqueurs (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); Ardis Butterfield, Poetry and Music in Medieval France: From Jean Renart to Guillaume Machaut (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Suzannah Clark, "'S'en dirai chançonete": Hearing Text and Music in a Medieval Motet,' Plainsong and Medieval Music 16 (2007), 31–59; Kay, Parrots and Nightingales; and Yolanda Plumley, The Art of Grafted Song: Citation and Allusion in the Age of Machaut (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>47</sup> A point taken up by Saltzstein, Refrain, 54.

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<sup>48</sup> Folio 46r-v, online at

<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b60009580/f99.image.r=français%2020050.langEN>.

<sup>49</sup> Appendix one, Boogaard, *Rondeaux et refrains*, 260-62.

<sup>50</sup> Jean Renart, *Le roman de la rose ou de Guillaume de Dole*, ed. Félix Lecoy (Paris: Champion, 1979), 5181-228.

<sup>51</sup> Term used by Butterfield, *Poetry and Music*, 17.

<sup>52</sup> Kay, *Parrots and Nightingales*, 15.

<sup>53</sup> The classic study remains Maureen Barry McCann Boulton, *The Song in the Story: Lyric Insertions in French Narrative Fiction, 1200-1400* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993).

<sup>54</sup> Rome, Vatican, Reg. Lat. 1725.

<sup>55</sup> Boulton, *Song in the Story*, 295-99, Butterfield, *Music and Poetry*, 303-313 and John Haines, *Eight Centuries of the Troubadours and Trouvères: The Changing Identity of Medieval Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 21-24.

<sup>56</sup> Boulton, *Song in the Story*, 1-19.

<sup>57</sup> Michel Zink, *Roman rose et rose rouge: Le roman de la rose ou de Guillaume de Dole de Jean Renart* (Paris: Nizet, 1979) and Butterfield, *Poetry and Music*, 18-24.

<sup>58</sup> Boulton, *Song in the Story*, 1.

<sup>59</sup> Lawrence Earp notes that with the exception of the fully notated *Roman de Fauvel*, ‘the *romans* have been the subject of very few musicological studies.’ See his ‘Roman,’ *Grove Music Online: Oxford Music Online* Oxford University Press. Web. 8 July 2015. <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/subscriber/article/grove/music/40674>>.

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<sup>60</sup> Kay, Parrots and Nightingales, 91-105. See, too, Elizabeth Zingesser's forthcoming book, French Troubadours. I am grateful to Professor Zingesser for sharing her work on this topic with me prior to publication.

<sup>61</sup> Kay, Parrots and Nightingales, 97-98.

<sup>62</sup> Kay, Parrots and Nightingales, 97-98.

<sup>63</sup> Folio 191v, online at <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84192440/f396.image>